

Post 721165

Russians Blast Johnson On Bid to Ease Tensions

MOSCOW, May 20 (AP)—The Soviet Union, in one of its harshest attacks on President Johnson, today rejected his bid to ease tensions.

"No one should expect that it is possible to interfere in the internal affairs of independent states, provoke armed conflicts here and there, commit acts of aggression against the Socialist countries and at the same time talk about some kind of agreements with the Soviet Union and about 'ending tensions,'" a Soviet statement said.

The statement, attributed to "official Soviet circles," was published by Tass.

It assailed Mr. Johnson's televised VE-Day anniversary speech to Europe May 7 as evidence that "the line of aggravating the international situation is increasingly prevalent in Washington."

"The impression in connection with the speech . . . is that the lessons of history of the latest decades passed by his consciousness," the statement said.

Mr. Johnson had called for improved relations with the Soviet bloc. The speech called for the reunification of Germany, a growth in European unity and trans-Atlantic ties.

Tass commented that the remark by the President that the door to peaceful settlement is open "looks strange, to say the least, in a statement which is imbued with hostility toward the forces of socialism and national liberation."

Tass reproached the President because "he did not even find it necessary to mention that the war was fought against German fascism, against the Hitler tyranny."